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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 001854

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [PREF](#) [XW](#) [SO](#) [YM](#) [COUNTER TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: MOD ALEWA ON USG ASSISTANCE, IRAQ AND SOMALIA

REF: SANAA 1836

Classified By: CDA Nabeel Khoury for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary. In a July 3 meeting between visiting CENTCOM Deputy Commanding General, LTG Lance L. Smith, CDA and Minister of Defense Ali Abdullah Alewa, the Minister discussed the need for increased USG military support, suggested a general amnesty in Iraq and asked for increased USG assistance in Somalia. End Summary.

USG Assistance: Treat Us Like Jordan

2. (C) Alewa thanked the USG for supporting the Yemeni "Special Security Forces" and hoped that Yemen could continue to be a partner in the GWOT. (Note: In Yemen there are two primary Special Forces units. The more successful one is the Central Security Force Counter Terrorism Unit (CSF-CTU), which is under the Ministry of Interior's control. The Ministry of Defense operates the Yemeni Special Operations Forces (YSOF). The USG currently only provides assistance to the CSF-CTU. The Office of Military Cooperation-Yemen (OMC-Yemen) is currently in discussions with the MOD to provide assistance to YSOF. End Note). Alewa also apologized over how the ROYG continually asks for increased military aid but added that Yemen needed help urgently since its prisons were "full of extremists". Apologetically, the Minister noted that it sounded as though he were complaining and expressed hope that one day the "complaining would stop and (the USG) will treat us the way they treat Jordan."

Iraq: Some Personal Advice

3. (C) During discussions on Iraq, the Minister told LTG Smith that "personally" he recommended that the newly elected Iraqi government grant a general amnesty to the majority of Iraqi/Ba'thi insurgents. "You must remember what their motivations are," he pointed out, "most insurgents are fighting not for ideology but because of food and fear of the new government." Alewa added that, coupled with a reduction of US troops in the cities, the amnesty could send a "very strong message" to the Iraqi and Arab people.

Somalia: USG Must Help

4. (C) Turning his attention to Somalia, Alewa expressed surprise over the USG's failure to provide any "serious" support to the newly elected Somali government of President Abdullahi Yusuf and the 275-member transitional Somali Parliament. "There will be no development in Somalia without USG support," he exclaimed, "if the USG wants a (Somali) government, there will be a government." He urged the USG to help Somalia "politically, militarily and with humanitarian aid."

5. (C) The Minister also pointed out that Yemen has begun to feel the strain of supporting Somali refugees, who have fled to Yemen in the thousands since the beginning of the Somali civil war in 1991. "As the Somali refugees' conditions in Yemen improve, Yemenis' conditions are getting worse," he noted. Alewa concluded by saying that Yemen could help the US by playing a primary role in helping to control extremism in Somalia. "These people usually fight like crazy," he quipped.

6. (C) Comment: The meeting with Alewa was routine. Later in the day, after Interior Minister Rashad al-Alimi cited similar references to CDA and LTG Smith on Somalia and the need to increase USG assistance to the same amount that is allocated to Jordan (reftel), The desire for parity with Jordan and for playing the mediator in Somalia are recurrent themes in post's talks with ROYG officials. Saleh is expected to raise these issues during his visit to Washington in November. End Comment.
Khoury